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14 June 1965

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

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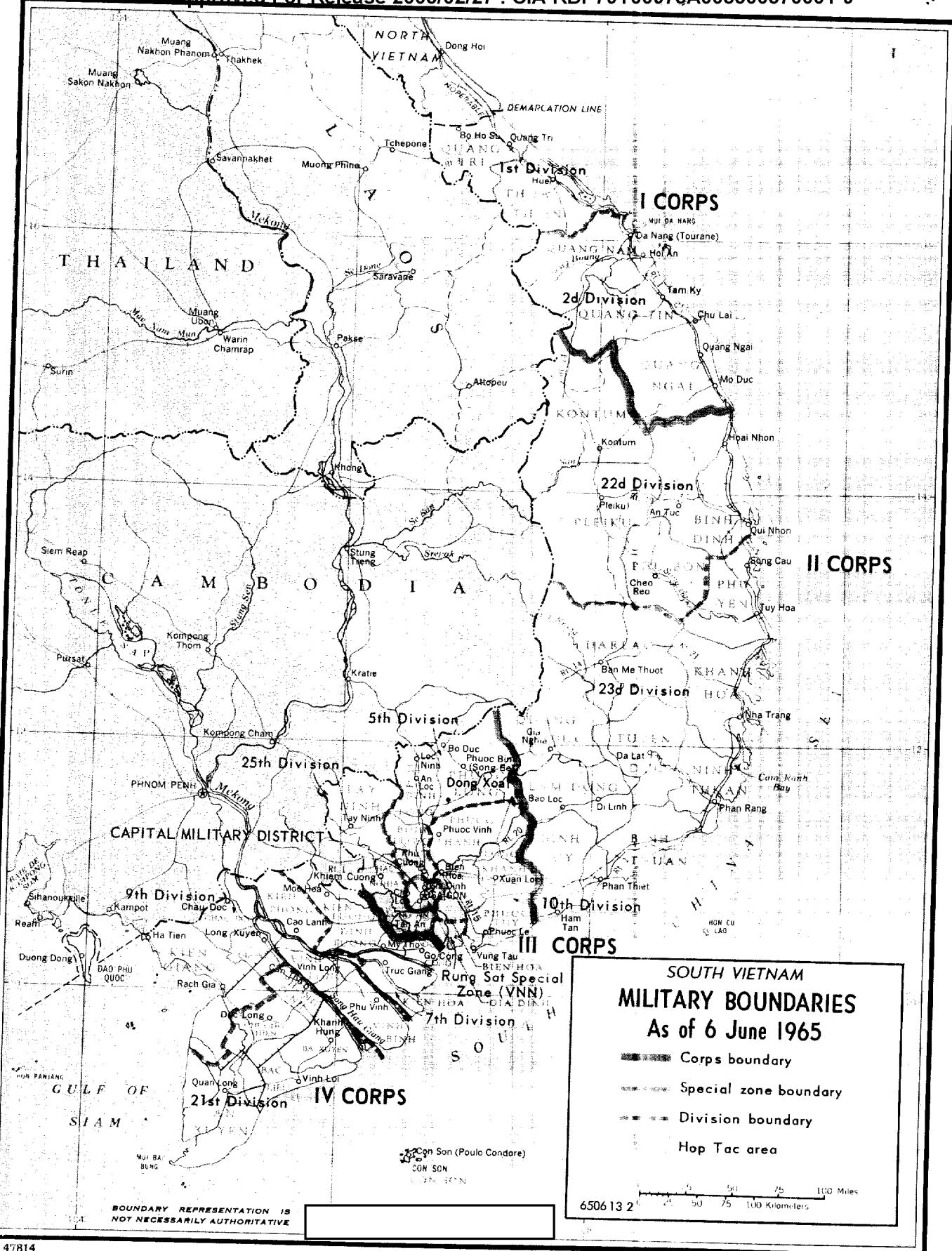
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*Vietnam: (Information as of 4:30 AM EDT)

[The Military Situation in South Vietnam: Renewed heavy fighting has been reported near the district town of Dong Xoai, in Phuoc Long Province.]

[On 12 June an estimated force of 500 Viet Cong launched a counterattack against a Vietnamese airborne battalion which was conducting a sweep operation in dense jungle terrain on the periphery of Dong Xoai. Reports from MACV indicate the battalion was badly mauled, with an estimated 322 personnel out of a total complement of 480 killed, wounded, or missing. The rest of the unit returned to Dong Xoai.]

[A heliborne operation is now in progress in the Dong Xoai area in conjunction with a ground operation, but no results have been renewed.]

[Viet Cong forces in the immediate vicinity of Dong Xoai are estimated to number at least five regular battalions and an artillery battalion supported by local guerrillas and civilian porters. MACV believes the Viet Cong can reinforce with up to four additional regular battalions in less than 24 hours. There are indications the Viet Cong intend to occupy and hold a rubber plantation northwest of Dong Xoai, possibly using this as a base from which to dominate Phuoc Long Province.]

[Government forces at Dong Xoai include three understrength battalions and the remnants of the airborne battalion hit on 12 June. A battalion of the 173rd US Airborne Brigade has been airlifted to an advance staging area at Phuoc Binh, in Phuoc Thanh Province, but has thus far not been committed to Dong Xoai.]

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[General Westmoreland notes that only three combat effective battalions of the Vietnamese general reserve remain uncommitted. He considers two of these essential to the security of Saigon. The Vietnamese joint general staff has been asked to alert two battalions in IV Corps for possible use in III Corps.]

[Elsewhere in the country, Viet Cong activity continued heavy over the week end, although it comprised mainly small-scale attacks, mortar fire, and harassment of posts and hamlets.]

Political Developments in South Vietnam: Saigon remained calm over the week end following resumption of political control by the armed forces. Catholic and Buddhist leaders claim to be pleased with the latest turn of events and have admonished their followers not to provoke incidents.

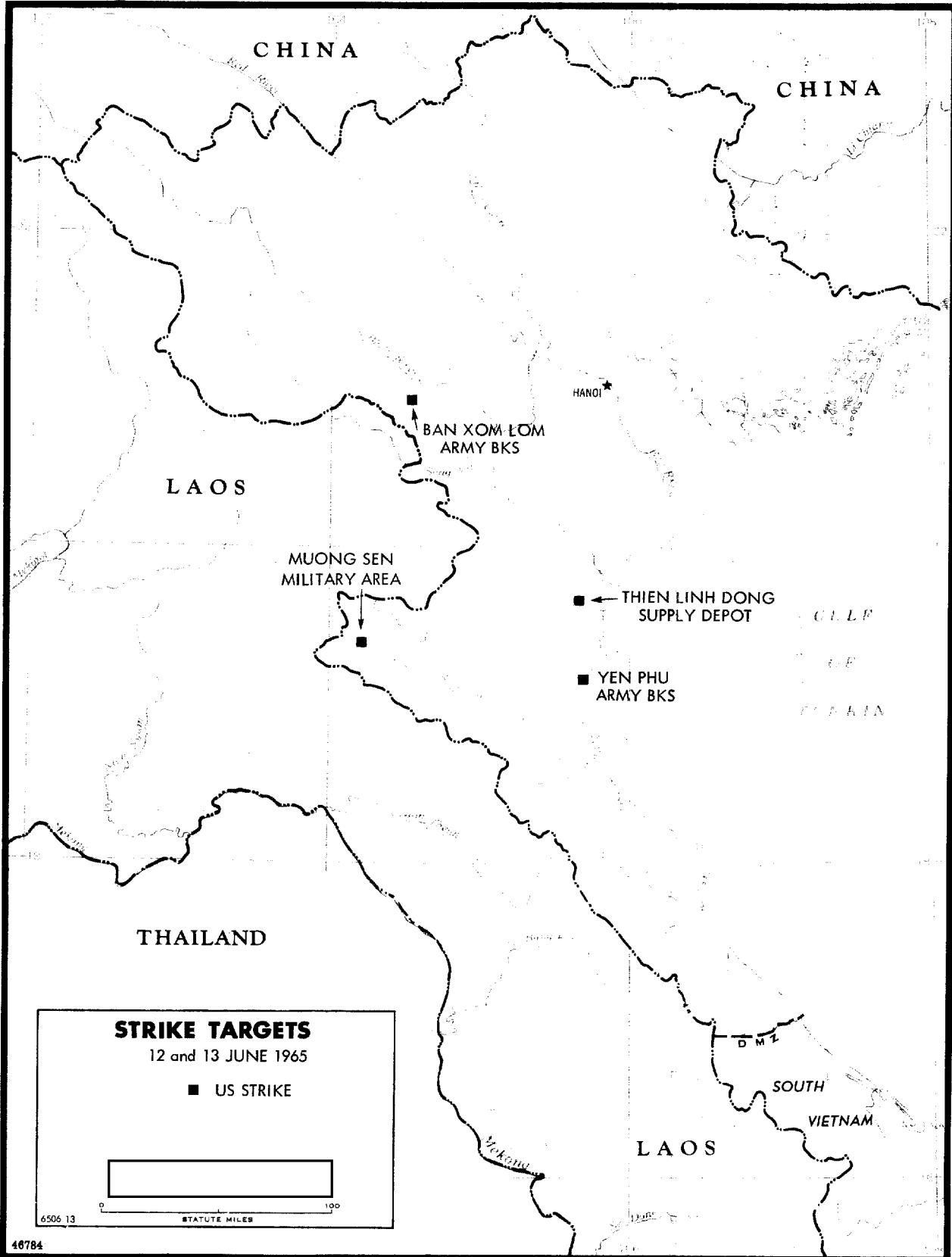
The generals have made a clean sweep of the provisional constitutional structure established last October. The Quat government remains in a caretaker status, but will probably be replaced some time this week by whatever alternative body the military decides upon.

If present plans hold, South Vietnam will be governed by a Supreme Military Council assisted by a Central Executive Committee which will carry out the day-to-day business of government. General Nguyen Van Thieu, defense minister in Quat's government, will probably serve as chairman of the Supreme Military Council, while General Nguyen Cao Ky, the air force chief, is reported to be the most likely choice to head the Central Executive Committee.]

Effective power now seems to reside in a triumvirate of generals--Thieu, Ky and Nguyen Chanh Thi, the commander of I Corps. Thieu apparently is emerging as first among equals, at least in the initial phase of this new period of military

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NORTH VIETNAM



rule. He lacks a significant power base of his own and may have difficulty maintaining himself against the competing ambitions of Ky and Thi.

Air Strikes in North Vietnam: On 12 June, USAF aircraft inflicted heavy damage on the Muong Sen military area, destroying a communications site, approximately nine buildings, and two secondary bridges. A planned strike against the Ban Xom Lom army barracks was cancelled because of poor weather.

On 13 June, US Navy aircraft damaged about 80 percent of the Thien Linh Dong supply depot and an estimated 20 percent of the Yen Phu army barracks. Only marginal results were achieved by armed reconnaissance missions as adverse weather conditions continued throughout the week end.

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*Dominican Republic: (Information as of 4:30 AM EDT) There are further indications of divisions and lowering morale in the rebel camp, but some rebel leaders apparently expect a boost in their fortunes this week through demonstrations of militant support for their cause in the interior.

Evidence of rebel disunity was apparent in the unauthorized visit to OAS representatives in Santo Domingo Saturday by the president of the rebel senate and a rebel cabinet officer. They stressed their great desire for an early political settlement, suggested that revisions in the 1963 constitution could facilitate a solution, and said they agree that the solving of the Communist problem is a necessity.

[There have also been] growing friction between the more moderate rebel leaders and the pro-Castro 14th of June Political Group (APCJ) and other extremist groups. Moderate rebel leaders are said to have authorized with reluctance the demonstration scheduled for today in rebel territory. []

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Other rebel leaders--particularly the extremists--are hopeful of stimulating pro-rebel demonstrations, and even violence, in the interior this week. Today, the sixth anniversary of the abortive Cuban-backed effort to oust the Trujillo dictatorship, may be the occasion for demonstrations in the provinces. However, there are continuing reports of extremist attempts to promote a general strike or local uprisings to begin later in the week.

Loyalist armed forces continue to maintain special security precautions in anticipation of new rebel outbreaks and during the past four days a number of suspected leftist agitators have been placed under preventive arrest. []

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